

HAWAIIAN GAZETTE

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WALTER G. SMITH, Editor.

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CHARLES S. CRANE, Manager.

FRIDAY JANUARY 1

OLD YEAR AND NEW.

The year 1908 will be written with capitals in the calendar of Hawaii as the one that has brought the greatest returns to the staple industry of the group, the most promise to diversified agriculture and the one which has ushered in a new era of development.

The returns from the merchandise this Territory has shipped away in the one year, chiefly sugar derived from the cultivation of a little more than 200,000 acres of land, amounts to \$40,568,796—or about \$225 per capita on the estimated present population. The per capita ownings in money of the United States proper as a whole, as estimated for one year by the last census, are \$31.40; of the United Kingdom, \$17.58; of France, \$37.13; of Germany, \$22.40; of The Netherlands, \$26.76; of Cuba, \$15.62; yet, counting out all other accumulations of money saved from former years or derived from Hawaiian investments, our own per capita is \$74.11 more than all the rest of them put together. The figures suffer from having been taken in different years, but not enough so to perceptibly narrow the margin of Hawaii's tremendous lead.

Aside from the development of the sugar industry Hawaii has experienced a notable gain in the production of pineapples. Over 400,000 cases went out in 1908, and there is the promise of a million cases this year. Tobacco farms are coming into bearing; more sisal has been planted; cotton has been introduced with good prospects; rubber groves have added to their area, and interest in all forms of agricultural production has increased; population is steadily and securely growing. In these respects alone the record of 1908 has been notable. The one year justifies all that was hoped of or promised for the policy of annexation which ends its first decade of trial with the present year.

The fact of equal if not greater importance to the expansion of industry, is the decision of the government to establish, on the Island of Oahu, the greatest military and naval post in the world. Beginnings have been made in a projected outlay for the physical plant alone, including dredging for naval approaches, forts, drydock, arsenals and camps, of \$10,000,000, a sum to be vastly exceeded in the end and which will assure the annual expenditure for operation and maintenance of between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000. As the year in which Hawaii began business as a war base, 1908 promises to be put down in local history as one from which great commercial, political and sociological changes accrued.

The outlook for the new year is sufficiently encouraging. We are promised a great circulation of money, an increase in the number of useful inhabitants, a better tourist trade, an expanded agriculture, more of all that goes to secure the greatest good to the greatest number and our fair share of comfort and happiness.

THE SICILIAN EARTHQUAKE.

The region where the great earthquake occurred, Sicily and southwestern Italy, has been a danger spot from immemorial times. Its seismic turmoil was so great in the classic ages that it found record in literature which has come down to us. Even then there were legends of greater unrest which modern geologists have confirmed by the discovery that the present island of Sicily was once a part of the Italian peninsula but was cut off by seismic cleavage. Having an active volcano within its borders and another on an islet just off shore and having proximity to those vaster depths of sea which suggest a possible seepage to the fires below, Sicily has been in perpetual danger of destruction and is yet. She is a magazine of explosive forces, and so, indeed, are the neighboring provinces of Italy. From first to last, hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of her people have been destroyed either by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or tidal waves, the last previous disaster of the kind having occurred in 1906. Ravaged by wars as the island has been by Carthaginians, Byzantines, Normans, Romans and modern peoples in turn, the greater number of Sicilian victims have gone to the account of old Enceladus, "the son of earth."

It is a singular comment on the unthinking conservatism of the people of this stricken country that they go on building the same kind of homes that their forefathers did, only to find them shaken down about their ears in the same old way. They forget much and learn nothing. The Japanese show far more prescience than the Sicilians in dealing with the seismic problem. Indeed that quality was shown by their ancestors. The Tartar elements in the Japanese race brought with them the ideas of a solid structure which yet prevail in the country whence they came; but after a short experience with earthquakes they invented or borrowed from the Malayan Japanese, the bamboo house which, instead of showing a puny and futile resistance to the earth-wave as the more solid buildings do, ride it easily like a bark does the ocean swell. Mediaeval Japanese prints or carvings reveal the bamboo huts, even in the wintry northern island. But Sicily is yet the Sicily of old. Its towns and cities are built to resist, while experience shows that, when the earth is convulsed, their old dwellings of stone and heavy timber collapse. What Sicilians need are the lightest practicable structures to live in. When they build these, the mortality lists, save on the ocean shores and the slopes of volcanoes, to which they persist in going back, will not make the story of their frequent earthquakes so appalling.

But now the world is in the presence of a calamity greater than that of Martinique, of Krakatoa, of Valparaiso or of San Francisco. Indeed, the San Francisco earthquake was a small affair—except for the fire that followed it, to this Sicilian and Italian convulsion. With 100,000 dead amid the ruins of fair cities, with coasts devastated and villages prostrate, the spectacle is one to invoke the charity of Christendom. It appeals to sympathy as no other disaster has done in these times.

HAWAII AND STATEHOOD.

We have never built much on the assurance of President Roosevelt that Hawaii may soon begin to look for statehood. It was a pleasant thing to say, but after all the President could not tell what Congress might do in such a matter; and there is nothing in Roosevelt's preference for Hawaii which binds the policy of the Senate and House or of his own successor in office.

Excepting when a crisis comes, as it did at the time Nevada was admitted, when two Senators were needed to support war measures of the administration, questions of statehood depend, chiefly, on the numbers and quality of the electorate. The reason why New Mexico is not a state is that so large a proportion of its inhabitants cannot speak English; and as to Arizona, the denial of statehood of which it complains, is due to the smallness and the uncertain tenure of its population. Hawaii is worse off proportionally in the matter of English-speaking people than is New Mexico and a larger percentage of its population is transient—that is to say, not bound to the soil by ownership or citizenship—than is the case with Arizona. While this condition lasts and no Nevada crisis intervenes, it is idle to talk of statehood, though if the land were to fall up with independent, English-speaking farmers, there would be no trouble at all. The possible inundation of serfs from Italy would, of course, give the day of statehood a long postponement; and there seems to be more danger of this than there is promise of Americanism.

Furthermore, the military plans of the Government for the war base of Hawaii must be reckoned with; and hints have come to town that the program is rather drastic. If it is carried out Hawaii will never be a state and may not remain a territory.

Judging from the cablegram about the Claus Spreckels will, there are the makings of a fine lawsuit in it. The way John D. and Adolph have been provided for in the will may not strike them as being equivalent to the \$10,000,000 apiece they might expect from a \$50,000,000 bequest.

THE DAY OF HIGH RESOLVE.

The majority of men make New Year resolutions and more try to keep them than is commonly thought. For weeks after January 1, the depressing effect of New Year resolutions is felt in the saloon and cigar business; and to make the less as light as possible, barkeepers keep open house on New Year's day so as to drown out the resolution fever, while cigar men see that their customers have gifts that will keep them smoking until the new year is under way.

A small percentage of the men who reform stick to their self-imposed pledges, and these are pleased to find that a good habit is just about as easy to acquire as a bad one. It is not the evil habit only that sticks. The boy who daunted to brush his teeth but finally got used to it, would no more omit that hygienic service now than the other boy, who never learned how, would take it up. Men who stop drinking and stick to it long enough to get the habit of abstinence find it about as hard to break that habit as drinking men do to break theirs. The fetters of habit are for the good and bad alike.

It is a mighty good thing to make New Year resolutions of some kind as a test of manhood. You ought to take stock and find out where you stand; and if your standing isn't good, try and improve it. If you can do so, you are the real thing; if not, you are degenerating; and a degenerating man is a more melancholy sight than a fine tree with the scale eating up its leaves and bark.

Resolutions should suit the individual case, but here is a good one of general application: "There are three companions with whom I shall keep on good terms—my wife, my stomach and my conscience."

CIVIL SERVICE TESTS FOR POLICE.

There is a way to get a better police force than we have or ever have had by means of an ordinance, passed by the Supervisors, putting appointment to that body on a civil service basis.

The Advertiser is assured that the Supervisors have the legal right to enact this reform.

By means of it, candidates for the police force would have to pass an examination as to their mental and physical fitness and, in the case of former peace officers, as to their records of efficiency in police service. Both politics and color would be ruled out of the test and the selection left wholly to merit.

This system extends to most responsible positions in the civil service of the United States and would be in line with better government for Honolulu.

Mr. Charles L. Rhodes, who leaves the Advertiser to become the Mayor's secretary, is a well-read lawyer and a newspaper man of marked ability. About twelve years ago he was chosen, with two others, from the staff of a Chicago newspaper, to infuse new blood into the writing force of the San Francisco Chronicle. He did brilliant work there, but, attracted by the fame of Hawaii, he came to Honolulu to join the staff of the Star. He was editor of that paper for some years and, on the retirement from this journal of Miss Krout, joined its staff, becoming its commercial and court writer. Readers of the Advertiser need no assurance that his work is good. Mr. Rhodes has always been a Democrat and is counted as one of the most sagacious advisers of that party in this Territory. He will be, in a very comprehensive sense, the right hand of Mayor Fern.

Mr. Makino, in the letter signed by him about the wage question, shows that the "improvised Japanese laborers," far from being unable to pay their living expenses and save something, send half their pay, or about \$3,000,000 a year, to Japan. They are earning, at the minimum scale of \$18—a wage given the least skilful and competent among them—more than twice as much money as they could get at home and three times what they need for living expenses! At Japanese boarding-houses it costs them only one-third of their incomes to live, leaving two-thirds to be saved or sent home, less the trifling item for clothes.

The sudden brilliancy of the sky just before the Sicilian earthquake was probably due to a show of fire in the craters of Stromboli and Aetna. In ancient times such a phenomenon might have given birth to some supernatural bugaboo that would have come down to us in the classics with a record of the multitudes it had scared to death. Dreadful as great earthquakes are, science has at least mitigated the force of their assault upon the nerves by explaining their signs and wonders, eliminating the wrath of heaven and evicting the gods and devils, genii, beasts of revelation, imps and other carnivora which used to add such needless terrors to earth-convulsion.

Up to and including President Harrison's time it was the custom to appoint the secretary of the Executive, at the close of the administration, a paymaster in the army with the rank of major. In his second term, President Cleveland made his former secretary, Dan Lamont, a cabinet officer, and this rule has been continued. Mr. Cortelyou, who aspired for the nomination which Mr. Taft received, is a signal beneficiary of the new method of reward. Wm. Loeb, Mr. Roosevelt's secretary, is now on the slate for a cabinet portfolio.

The news that the Governor has had a "favorable interview" with Mr. Carnegie, indicates that the rich ironmaster may yet come to the relief of this important city and give it the public library structure which its own people have felt unable to build. Mr. Carnegie has reason to think that the poor are always with him, but he may be pardoned some surprise, having heard about \$40,000,000 crops, to see people flocking in from Hawaii with their "Please, kind sir, a little dole for charity."

The fleet supplies that are being rushed to Messina are a gift which the sufferers will appreciate. A half million dollars' worth of naval stores, purchased as they have been at the lowest cash price, amount to a very large tonnage indeed, and will sustain the life of a host of people. Food and shelter are needed in the stricken zone quite as much as money, so the charity of our government has been wisely exercised.

The new Mayor's appointments include those of some Republicans who have made good in office and is a tribute to efficiency. Mr. Thurston, the fire chief; Mr. Frazee, the Superintendent of Electric Lights, and Mr. Gere, the County Engineer, will stay put. This is a policy which will please the taxpayers and strengthen confidence in the new administration.

The same people who so bitterly opposed a "centralized" Territorial government are the ones who drew up and passed the municipal bill which puts everything in the hands of the Mayor. They are repentant now because a Democratic Mayor was elected. But for that, the workings of the appointment mill would be greeted with frantic applause.

A facetious paper says that Taft will be inaugurated President of the United States on March 4, 1909; that precisely four months thereafter all of the banks in the United States, most of the factories, and practically all of the great business house will close. Compute four months from March 4.

The safety valve attachments of Aetna and Stromboli have never worked well as compared with those of volcanoes here and in several other parts of the world; though it is possible that, but for these vents, Sicily and Calabria would long ago have been blown into the air, as the Island of Krakatoa was.

What will happen when the 14-inch guns at Waikiki go off may be judged from the fact that the concussion of 10-inch guns in the naval bombardment of Wei-hai-Wei, in 1895, was felt, in the shaking of the paper windows of Chinese houses, at the Shantung Promontory, fifty-six miles away.

Mr. Ruef had a belated Christmas present of fourteen years' imprisonment. Let us all hope that the higher courts will cut any string that may have been tied to it. A sequestration of Ruef for fourteen years is none too long.

Mr. Burton was beaten for mayor of Cleveland by Tom Johnson. If he hadn't been, he would have stood small chance for the United States Senatorship he now receives. His was a lucky political catastrophe.

One may predicate a large emigration this coming year from Sicily and Calabria.

There is a good opening in Honolulu now for at least twenty-five white carpenters from the Coast.

The earthquake in Sicily and Calabria occurred about the same time in the morning as did that of San Francisco.

CABLE REPORTS

(Associated Press Cablegrams.)

(Continued From Page One.)

ROME, Italy, December 29.—The total death toll in the city of Messina from yesterday's earthquake is estimated at 50,000 persons. The total in all districts will probably be double that number.

Many cities and towns are in ruins and it is impossible to obtain exact figures of the extent of the deaths and disaster.

Reggio is isolated and the city is believed to be destroyed.

The Strait of Messina has been altered by the seismic disturbance and navigation is therefore made extremely hazardous. Great loss has been suffered by shipping.

Messina is being looted and fire adds to the horror of the situation.

Mount Etna is particularly active.

The King and Queen of Italy will go to the scene of the disaster.

Pope Pius has started a relief fund with a subscription of one million lire. The world is responding to the call for assistance.

Many foreigners are among the victims of the disaster.

The prison at Messina collapsed with the first shake, and the prisoners readily escaping aided in sacking the city. The Chief of Police is dead and the barracks are demolished. The commander was killed in the ruins.

All of the Province of Calabria is devastated.

The tidal wave did frightful damage along the coast and scores are reported to be alive, but penned beneath the ruins. A thousand are dead.

At Palmi hundreds were killed. Bagnara has a thousand victims. Cassenza reports five hundred dead. The tourist hotel at Palermo was destroyed.

All the priests and nuns at Messina perished.

Relief is being organized as rapidly as possible. The Red Cross is doing splendid work.

ROME, December 30.—It is now estimated that the dead in the districts devastated by the earthquake number not less than 100,000.

Warships of all nations are hurrying to the scene. Some that have arrived have been transformed into floating hospitals.

There is grave danger of pestilence and bodies are being burned at Messina. Torrential rains are falling at the latter place and the fleeing thousands and the cries of the injured form a most harrowing spectacle. Many people have gone insane.

Incomplete reports indicate that the dead at Messina will number from 12,000 to 50,000. A. S. Cheney, the American Consul, and his wife were killed. In Reggio and adjacent villages are at least 45,000 corpses. Cassano reports 1000 and Bagnara 2000. The latest reports say that 4000 soldiers are buried underneath their barracks at Messina. Forty-one out of 200 customs officers were saved and out of 280 railroaders eight were saved.

The lighthouses on the coast are gone and a great rock near Charybdis has fallen and now blocks the entrance to the Strait.

There is great suffering for food and clothing. The earthquake occurred at 5:30 in the morning.

All the bourses and theaters are closed.

The King and Queen will arrive in Sicily today.

LONDON, December 30.—The United Kingdom is in the grip of a violent blizzard. The channel steamer service, telegraph and telephone business have been suspended and the railways are blocked. There is great suffering among the poor.

SAN FRANCISCO, December 30.—Yesterday Abram Ruef was sentenced to serve a term of fourteen years' imprisonment at San Quentin.

SAN FRANCISCO, December 30.—The Mayor has removed President Boyle of the Board of Education.

SAN FRANCISCO, December 30.—Mayor Taylor has issued a proclamation asking for contributions to relieve distress in the devastated provinces of Italy.

ROME, December 31.—The latest reports concerning the total number of deaths as a result of the great earthquake of Monday place it at one hundred and ten thousand. The city of Messina was the scene of the greatest proportion of fatalities. Out of a total population there of ninety thousand people, the number of killed is seventy thousand.

Telegraphic communication with Messina has been restored, but the line is being monopolized for the transmission of government messages.

BRINGING WOUNDED TO NAPLES.

NAPLES, December 31.—An Italian cruiser arrived here yesterday from the scene of the earthquake, bringing five hundred wounded persons. Other vessels with thousands of wounded are expected today. Many buildings are being improvised as hospitals to receive them.

CORPSES CHOKE THE STRAIT.

ROME, December 31.—The Strait of Messina is choked with the corpses of men and animals, and the stench from the decaying bodies is awful.

CONVERTED INTO DESERT.

The former enchanting coastline of the Messina Strait has been converted through the crumbling down of the cliffs and the effects of the tidal wave into a hideous desert.

Eighteen hundred prisoners were killed in the destruction of the prison at Montelone.

The rainstorms are continuing and adding to the suffering.

KING AND QUEEN WEEP.

The King and Queen are at Messina and are frequently in tears at the terrible sights of suffering on every hand. The King has personally extricated several persons from the ruins of fallen buildings, and the Queen spent yesterday in the hospitals assisting in the work there.

AMERICANS REPORTED AT MESSINA.

There is an unverified report to the effect that there were ninety American guests in the Messina hotels at the time of the disaster.

THE AFTERNOON REPORT.

ROME, December 30.—At least half of the population of Calabria and Eastern Sicily have been killed or injured in the catastrophe. Thousands of people are pinioned under the ruins in the city of Messina, and the populace of the province are starving while their ruined homes are being wiped out by fire.

The city of Reggio has suffered total destruction. It was swept and inundated by a tidal wave which devastated the coast.

The Aeolian Islands have been devastated and further shocks are daily felt.

Shocks are continuing at Messina, Syracuse, Palermo Island and Utica. The people are terrorized.

The volcano of Stromboli is extremely active, vomiting lava in torrents.

The city of Bagnara is in ruins and hardly one of the inhabitants remain to tell the fearful story of destruction.

ROANOKE, Virginia, December 31.—Sixty miners are dead here as a result of a disaster in one of the local collieries.

PARIS, December 31.—The court has ruled that the children of Count Boni de Castellane and his former wife, the Princess de Sagan, formerly Anna Gould, shall remain in the custody of the mother.

SAN FRANCISCO, December 31.—Kaufman defeated Barry in their fight last night.

OLD TIME IDOL

WON FOR ENEMY

George Selby (Kid McCoy) had an experience upon one occasion that he never told to the newspapers. McCoy was on a train between New York and Boston. Getting into an altercation with the conductor, a slight but powerful Irish-American, the "Kid" rose up to wipe the offender from the map of the world. Instead, he received a short-arm jolt flush on the jaw and went down and out for considerably more than the usual minutes.

Finally recovering, he said faintly to the conductor:

"I never thought 'Kid' McCoy would get a jolt like that from a bobby!"

"Great Lord!" shouted the ticket puncher. "You aren't McCoy, are you?"

"That's me," ruefully replied the middleweight.

The little man shivered.

"Why didn't you tell me so? Why, man, I've got two months' salary bet on you for tomorrow night!"

In spite of his sore jaw McCoy went into the ring the following evening and disposed of his opponent in the third round. But it broke his heart to think that by doing so he was winning a cozy bet for the man who knocked him out.